

Message Text

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21

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

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R 301448Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2516

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEM ASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS STOCKHOLM 3283

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PINS, SF, WA, SW

SUBJECT: REPORTED KILLINGS IN NAMIBIA

REF: STATE 163176

1. STOCKHOLM MORNING PAPER DAGENS NYHETER CARRIED FRONT-PAGE STORY JULY 25 ABOUT "MASSACRE" IN NAMIBIA. STORY LATER PICKED UP BY OTHER PAPERS AND TV. BASIS OF STORY WAS RECENT JAUNT TO NAMIBIA UNDER SWAPO AUSPICES BY TWO FREE LANCE JOURNALISTS, PER SUNDEN OF SWEDEN AND RUDI SPREE OF THE NETHERLANDS. THE TWO BROUGHT BACK TAPES AND PHOTOS OF AN ALLEGED MASSACRE BY SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS OF 105 PERSONS IN A VILLAGE NEAR ZAMBIAN BORDER. STORY BASED ON INTERVIEW WITH THE "SOLE SURVIVOR," A MAN NAMED AARON.

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2. THE ARTICLE REPORTS THAT THE TWO REPORTERS FOUND THE

SKULLS AND BONES OF THE VILLAGERS SCATTERED OVER AREA;
PHOTOS OF AARON AND SKULLS IN DAGENS NYHETER ARTICLE
(POUCHING). AARON REPORTEDLY SAID: "ONE DAY THE SOUTH
AFRICANS CAME TO OUR VILLAGE AND THE SAME EVENING WE
WERE TOLD TO FORM A LINE. A PORTUGUESE WHISPERED TO ME
TO ESCAPE, OTHERWISE I WOULD BE KILLED. IF FLED AND ALL
THE OTHERS WERE KILLED - MY WIVES, MY CHILDREN, AND ALL
THOSE WHO LIVED IN OUR VILLAGE. AFTER THE KILLING THE
BODIES WERE PILED UP AND BURNED."

3. ARTICLE ASSERTS THAT UN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH SUNDEN AND SPREE, AND THAT THEY
ARE TO APPEAR BEFORE IT AT GENEVA IN AUGUST; ALSO,
REPRESENTATIVES OF COMMISSION WILL GO TO NAMIBIA TO
INTERVIEW AARON. MEANWHILE, THE TWO REPORTERS ARE
PREPARING A FILM ABOUT THEIR TRIP TO NAMIBIA, WHICH WILL
BE RUN ON SWEDISH TV IN LATE AUGUST.

4. SWEDISH MEDIA REPORTED STRONG DENIAL BY SOUTH AFRICAN
MINISTER PIET BOTH, WHO CALLED THE REPORT "SHEER NONSENSE,"
BUT SAID THAT HE ADMIRERD THEIR SPIRIT OF FANTASY.

5. COMMENT: THE AUTHENTICITY OF THIS STORY HAS BEEN
MILDLY QUESTIONED HERE, ALTHOUGH DAGENS NYHETER IS A SERIOUS
IF CRUSADING NEWSPAPER. RIVAL PAPER SVENSKA
DAGBLADET, IN EDITORIAL SAID: "NATURALLY, IT IS DIFFICULT
TO CHECK WHETHER REPORTS LIKE THESE ARE CORRECT. THE
LOCATION IS UNKNOWN, THE PICTURES ADMITTEDLY ARRANGED.
THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT IS LIKELY TO DECLARE THAT
IT HAS NO IDEA ABOUT THE BACKGROUND TO THE REPORTS.
WHAT TO BELIEVE DEPENDS ON WHOM YOU TRUST MOST, THE
LIBERATION MOVEMENT SWAPO OR THE SOUTH AFRICAN REGIME,
AS SUNDEN/SPREE POINTED OUT."
STRAUSZ-HUPE

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